Visit of Prime Minister to G-8 Summit at France

*63. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister attended the G-8 Summit at France held on June 1, 2003;

(b) if so, the subject discussed there at and decisions arrived;

(c) whether the Prime Minister advocated phasing out of trade-distorting movement of personnel for providing services, elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to exports of developing countries and monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of the Doha round of WTO negotiations; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the summit on these issues?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) to (d) A statement is attached.

Statement

Prime Minister participated in the G-8 Enlarged Dialogue in Evian on 1st June 2003 at the invitation of President Chirac. There was a free and frank exchange of views on development assistance to developing countries, transfer of technologies, environment related issues and trade barriers that affect developing countries. The Enlarged Dialogue was the first of its kind and was not intended to produce a formal Summit document. Its intention was to articulate concerns of developing countries and exchange views with developed countries on the above issues.

PM expressed disappointment at the lack of progress so far on the Millennium Development Round since the Doha meeting. PM underlined the need to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers, especially phasing out all trade distorting agricultural subsidies, removal of restrictions on the free movement of natural persons for providing services and broader access of developing countries to pharmaceuticals.

The issues raised by PM were also reflected in the statements of some of the other developing country participants in the Enlarged Dialogue. While there was no formal comment by the G8 on the issues

raised in the dialogue the G-8 Declaration adopted on 3rd June did reflect some of the concerns of developing countries. It reiterated the importance of improved market access for all WTO members, especially for developing countries to ensure their integration into the multilateral system and expressed commitment for their general development.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: That is why I read your reply. The question is very clear. It is about exchange of views of development assistance to developing countries. Pakistan is a developing country like ours, and this is the assistance they have got.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, the G-8 Summit, as the hon. Member has very rightly said, in the Enlarged G-8 Summit, where apart from the eight members of the so-called G-8, 14 developing countries, along with the Secretary-General of the U.N. and the President of the World Bank and the Managing Director of the IMF were invited by President Chirac to participate in this Enlarged Summit. The Prime Minister of India was invited to this Summit, and in his intervention in the meeting, the Prime Minister emphasised—because this was the main issue which was being discussed in this Enlarged Summit—the following points. I would like to mention it to the House, though they are repeated here: Need to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers, especially phasing out all trade distorting agricultural subsidies, removal of visa and non-visa restrictions, broader access to developing countries for pharmaceuticals, ways of implementing the clean development mechanism for investment and technology flows, consideration of recent British proposal for an international financial facility and consideration of the Asian Bonds Initiative of the Prime Minister of Thailand. These were the points relating to the international developmental and trade matters that the Prime Minister emphasised in that meeting. Some of it, as we have said in the reply, was reflected separately when the G-8 Summit actually held their own Summit and issued a statement because after the Enlarged Summit, no statement was issued. But, G-8 issued a statement after their meeting, and in that some of these things were reflected.

Now, if you want to shift the entire focus of this question to Pakistan and the recent developments in Pakistan-US relations, Sir, I am in your hands, and I can reply to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No need.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: I am sorry, I don't want to drag the Minister and the hon. Prime Minister on this. I have a folder which describes the same thing you have replied. It covers topics such as "G-8 talks of world economy and terrorism". Terrorism was a subject, and I congratulate the Prime Minister for taking up that subject over there, and he got the support also. Why is the Government shying away from saying that $ 1.5 billion American assistance is being given to Pakistan? Why are you shying away on this? Why are you taking technical camouflage on this?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, I am not taking shelter. As I said, I am in your hands. If you permit me to answer this question, Sir, I will reply to this. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MURLI DEORA: When the U.S. Government is giving a military assistance of $ 1.5 billion to Pakistan, is it not our responsibility to know what is the component of that?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Nobody is denying that. Sir, it is a fact that President of Pakistan, General Musharraf, travelled to the U.S. He had a meeting with President Bush at Camp David. When they emerged from the meeting, they both addressed the media and we have all heard that. It is also a fact that in that meeting, the U.S. Administration has promised Pakistan as assistance of $ 3 billion spread over five years, starting from 1st October, 2004. This is subject to Pakistan's performance with regard to three criteria they have fixed. This whole matter is supposed to go to the U.S. Legislature and the U.S. Legislature would debate upon it and then decide upon it. At the moment, there are no details except for the fact that $ 1.5 billion, 50% of the total package, would be the developmental assistance and the other half would be the military assistance. This is all the information. The details are not available.

श्री संजय निरुपम: माननीय सभापति जी, ग्रुप-आठ के देशों की बैठक में माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी को आमंत्रित किया गया, यह निश्चित तौर पर पूरे देश के लिए और देश के तमाम नागरिकों के लिए गर्व की बात थी। प्रधानमंत्री जी को दुनिया की आठ महाशक्तियों के साथ बात करते हुए हमने भी देखा है और उसमें काफी गंभीर चर्चा भी हुई। इस पूरी गंभीर चर्चा के बीच प्रधानमंत्री जी, जिनका हास्य बड़ा दिलचस्प होता है, उस हास्य से एक जानकारी निकलकर आई थी और वह यह कि जब वे लौट रहे थे तब एयर इंडिया के विमान में पत्रकारों से चर्चा करते

समय प्रधानमंत्री जी ने एक रहस्योद्घाटन किया था कि पूरी बातचीत और पूरे डिनर के दरमियान जार्ज बुश सिर्फ पानी पी रहे थे। यह जानकारी सुनकर बड़ा अच्छा लगा लेकिन क्या प्रधानमंत्री जी यह रहस्योद्घाटन सिर्फ हास्य के दृष्टिकोण से कर रहे थे ...(**व्यवधान**)...

श्री सभापति: क्या पूछना चाहते हैं आप? पानी पी रहे थे या कुछ और पी रहे थे?

श्री संजय निरुपम: सभापति जी, यह बड़ी दिलचस्प जानकारी थी। मैं प्रधानमंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या महज हास्य के लिए आपने यह रहस्योद्घाटन किया था या श्री जार्ज बुश के मद्य निषेध के निर्णय से प्रेरणा लेकर इस देश में भी मद्यपान निषेध का कोई अभियान चलाने की इरादा है?

SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the question asked of the hon. Minister for External Affairs is in the context of hon. Prime Minister's discussions in Evian, regarding post-Doha WTO negotiations and the follow up. The question that arises from the reply and which I am now putting to the hon. External Affairs Minister is: Whether the Government is prepared and formalized a position paper for negotiation in WTO in consultation with other developing countries so that the interests of the developing countries, with reference to market access, is actually protected, and that India, as in the past, takes a leadership position in articulating the interests of the developing countries; and, whether the stalemate resulting from the linkage of trade in services with open access, etc., is going to be resolved.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, in his intervention the hon. Prime Minister said at the large meeting of the G-8 and I quote, "It is quite clear that the developing countries are deeply disappointed by the progress so far on the Millennium Development Round since Doha meeting nearly two years ago. I think that we need to set some benchmarks for monitoring and evaluating the outcome of Doha Round in terms of concrete progress towards a global trading regime which would promote development. Some areas where we need these benchmarks". And he then went to discribe these benchmarks.

Though the WTO is not the subject which falls according to the Rules of Business within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of External Affairs, but I would like to say before this House, Sir, through you, that the Commerce and Industry Minister is continuously in touch with his colleagues in other developing countries and, in fact, with some of the

colleagues in the industrialized countries also. There is going to be another Ministerial Meeting in Montreal where he will participate before the Ministerial Meeting in Cancum. India has always, I mean, India has formulated its views, India is coordinating its views with other developing countries and wherever it is necessary for us to emphasise our point of view, we are doing that. I would like to inform the House that we have a large measure of support as a result of the efforts of the Prime Minister, as a result of the efforts of the rest of the members of the Government with regard to the issues of concern of India and to the developing countries.

Movement of Indian workers to Iraq

*64. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:
DR. ABRAR AHMED†:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether removal of restrictions on movement of Indian workers to Iraq is expected to result in a large scale migration of skilled workers as Indian workers are preferred in the Middle East; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) and (b) Initially there were expectations that removal of restrictions on recruitment of Indian personnel for employment in Iraq would result in fairly large employment opportunities for Indians particularly for the reconstruction works. However, there was resistance from local unemployed Iraqis to induction of outsiders. Now, most of the contractors in Iraq are employing Iraqis.

डा॰ अबरार अहमद: सभापति महोदय, अमरीका ने इराक के अंदर जो दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण विध्वंस किया, उसके पुनर्निर्माण में निश्चित रूप से भारतीय श्रमिकों का महत्वपूर्ण योगदान रहेगा। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह कहना चाहता हूं कि भारतीय श्रमिक जब वहां पर पुनर्निर्माण के लिए जायेंगे तो उसमें दोनों देशों की नीतियां काम करेंगी। जो भारतीय श्रमिक वहां कार्य के लिए बुलाए जायेंगे या वे जायेंगे तो उसमें हमारे देश की क्या नीति है और क्या वे जाने वाले श्रमिक प्राइवेट कंपनियों के माध्यम से जैसे पहले पैसा दे कर जाते रहे हैं वैसे ही जायेंगे या उसमें कोई सरकारी तौर-तरीका भी होगा? क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह भी सुनिश्चित करेंगे कि वहां उनके साथ अच्छा व्यवहार हो और इराक की इसमें क्या नीति है? क्या इसके अंदर इराक में श्रमिकों के

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Abrar Ahmed.